(d) A proposal to increase the price of APM-gas gradually in under consideration of the Government.

Road-map for new gas connections

†1330. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has given directions to oil companies to prepare road-map for providing 5.5 crores new gas connections;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the areas where new gas connections will be provided and the time-limit fixed therefore;

(d) whether Government has determined the number of new gas connections and the area for each oil company; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) to (e) As per the "Vision-2015" adopted for LPG sector, 5.5 crore new LPG connections are targeted to be released by the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) by the year 2015 to raise LPG population coverage to 75%. The focus would be on rural areas and areas where LPG coverage is low.

As a step towards this objective, a new scheme of rural LPG distributor namely, Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitrak Yojana (RGGLVY) for small size LPG distribution agencies has been launched on 16.10.2009 and subsequently advertisement inviting applications for distributors under the scheme have been released by in 8 States where the reach of LPG is low namely, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal covering 1215 locations.

Incident of fire at IOC depot at Jaipur

†1331. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the probe in the incident of fire at Indian Oil Corporation unit in Jaipur has been completed;

(b) if so, the major reasons therefor;

(c) whether any conspiracy angle has been established;

(d) whether foreign elements have been found to be involved in the incident;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) whether it has a hazardous effect on the atmosphere of Delhi and surrounding States; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) to (d) A seven member inquiry committee under the chairmanship of Shri M.B. Lal, Technical Member (P&NG), Appellate Tribunal for Electricity and Ex-Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited has been constituted by the Ministry on 30.10.2009 to inquire into the causes of the incident at Jaipur and to suggest remedial measures to prevent recurrence of such incidents. The committee will submit its report within 60 days. Preliminary findings have indicated that there was massive leakage of Motor Spirit (MS) from the valve of one of the tank, which let formation of vapour cloud. Spark from an unknown source resulted in explosion of the vapour cloud, which started the fire in all the 11 tanks of the depot.

(e) and (f) Damage caused to the environment is being investigated by Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board.

Auction of NELP under VIII rounds

1332. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the eight rounds of auctions under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) block-wise and bid-wise;

(b) the details of winners of the bids block-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that with every round average number of bid per block has been reducing; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) and (b) Under the eighth bid round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-VIII), 70 blocks (24 deepwater blocks, 28 shallow water blocks, 18 onland blocks) were offered. Bids were opened on 12.10.2009. 76 bids have been received for 36 blocks. Single bids have been received in respect of 20 blocks and multiple bids have been received in respect of 16 blocks. The evaluation of bids is underway.

(c) and (d) There is no particular trend of increase/reduction in average number of bids per block in successive rounds of bidding under NELP. During NELP VIII round, the number of bids received per block has declined due to global financial situation and the response received is in tune with responses to similar offers made in other countries.